

Hello:

"Copy protection", as it's being called, should not be mandated on HDTV broadcast receiving equipment. Consumers have been recording various forms of broadcast media for decades, and the courts have consistently upheld their rights to do so under copyright fair use protection. A broadcast flag is neither necessary nor desirable to allow this continued fair use of what's on the airwaves. HDTV may be an emerging new format, but there has been no change in the fundamental rights that consumers have to view or record it. The proposed mandate would make the receiving equipment more expensive, but more importantly, it would be used to deprive consumers of their fair use rights under current copyright law.